

Welcome back. I hope everyone had a refreshing summer. This Friday Five is purely selfish. I'm including five things that I found interesting this summer that I plan to implement in my classroom. I hope you can find some uses for these exciting tools.

1. **Zooburst:** ZooBurst is a digital storytelling tool that is designed to let anyone easily create their own customized 3D pop-up books. Click on some of the pictures below to check out books created by members of the ZooBurst community. You have to apply to become a member but it is free and usually educators are approved within a day.
<http://alpha.zooburst.com/index.php>
2. **Kidblogs:** Kidblog.org is built by teachers, for teachers, so students can get the most out of the blogging process. Kidblog meets the need for a **safe** and **simple** blogging platform suitable for elementary and middle school students. Most importantly, Kidblog allows teachers to monitor and control all publishing activity within the classroom blogging community. <http://kidblog.org/home.php>
3. **WebQuest Creator:** Filamentality is a fill-in-the-blank tool that guides you through picking a topic, searching the Internet, gathering good Internet links, and turning them into online learning activities. Support is built-in along the way through Mentality Tips. In the end, you'll create a web-based activity you can share with others even if you don't know anything about HTML or serving web pages.
This site makes it very easy to create a webquest.
<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/index.html>
4. **Animal Jam:** Students love virtual worlds, they enjoy being immersed in a story, sent on a mission, and interacting with each other to complete adventures and learn. Animal Jam lets them do all of these things while providing a virtual world where they can discover real-world plant and animal information and follow a rich storyline that has National Geographic's multi-media content built in. Cool huh?! Animal Jam does something else, it excites students to learn more about the real world around them, so when they aren't playing in the virtual world, they will be excited to learn more about the world they live in. The virtual world is an easy one for students to pick up on and learn, it is perfect for young students and caters to their specific levels of play and developmental stages. Animal Jams will be one of those environments that is as appealing to fourth grade students as it is to first grade students. The online environment is safe and monitored so you can feel comfortable introducing it in your classroom. <http://www.animaljam.com/>
5. **My Story Maker:** **My StoryMaker** lets you control characters and objects - and creates sentences for you! Once you are done with your story, you can print it out. You cannot go back and edit a story once you have ended it but, if you click "yes" when asked to share it with others, you can print it out or save it as a PDF on your hard drive.
<http://www.carnegielibrary.org/kids/storymaker/>